

The Old Paths

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"36,000 Scripture Quotations"

Jarrod Jacobs

While doing some study concerning Christians from the first through fourth centuries, I came across some facts that amazed and humbled me. I learned that their writings were very Bible-centered, focusing most of the content of their writings on the New Testament. Men like J. Harold Greenlee, and Bruce Metzger have stated that we could reconstruct the New Testament from the writings of these men. Imagine that! The writings of these men were so focused upon the gospel of Christ that one could reconstruct the New Testament from what they wrote! In fact, those who have studied these writings have counted no less than 36,000 Scripture quotations from the various writers! *

Specifically, I have found that **Irenaeus** (120-205 A.D., a student of Polycarp, who was a student of the apostle John) recorded some 1,819 quotations from the New Testament. These included quotes from Matthew, Mark, Luke, Acts, I Corinthians, I Peter, Hebrews, and Titus. **Ignatius** (50-110? A.D.) quotes from Matthew, John, Acts, Romans, I Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, Galatians, Colossians, James, I and II Thessalonians, I and II Timothy and I Peter. **Clement of Alexandria** (150-212 A.D.) quoted from the New Testament some 2,406 times! His

works include quotations from 24 books of the New Testament! **Cyprian** (died in 258 A.D.) cited about 740 Old Testament passages, and 1,030 New Testament passages in his works. These are but a few of the examples of early writers who, when they wrote, quoted extensively from the Bible. *

Doesn't such facts as these fill us with amazement? Don't they also humble us? When I read such facts as the above, I realized that the reason that there were such a large number of Bible quotations in those men's writings is because this is what they were teaching! They were not teaching and spreading the thoughts of men, but were teaching the word of God to people. The best way to do this is to include the actual quotations from Scripture. Is there any wonder why the Ephesian letter says, "*Whereby when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ*" (Eph. 3:4)?

When I learned those facts, it made me want to re-examine my preaching and writing. Am I quoting Scripture in my preaching and writing? Am I making sure folks know that when I preach, write, and talk with them, that I am putting the Lord's word and will first above all else (Matt. 6:33; Col. 3:17)? In addition to this, it makes me look around and notice what "others" are doing. Brethren, we are seeing a trend moving us toward less and less Scripture in our preaching and teaching. We know

Satan and the world wants less Scripture (even none), but what about those of us who are called out of the world? What about those of us who are a part of the "*royal priesthood*" (I Pet. 2:9)? What did those men of the first, second, third, and fourth centuries see that those of us in the twenty-first century are not seeing? Many are treating the Bible lightly. Could it be that we are taking the Bible knowledge of the population for granted, and assuming folks know more than they really do? Is it possible that "we" have become embarrassed by the gospel? Timothy was told, "*Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner*" (II Tim. 1:8). The apostle Paul said, "*I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ ...*" (Rom. 1:16). Are we ashamed? Or, is it that we are ashamed to reveal our ignorance of the Scriptures (Hos. 4:6)? Either way, let us repent and let us be a people whose hearts and lives are filled with Scripture!

This article is a call to people to, "*let the word of Christ dwell in (us) richly in all wisdom ...*" (Col. 3:16) so that we may obey God! Of course, such a way of life happens by spending more time in God's word, not less! Let us therefore demand God's word be quoted and taught in our preaching, writing, and in all aspects of our lives. Peter said, "*If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God ...*" (I Pet. 4:11). God's people were once called "walking Bibles". Can anyone venture a guess as to why that was? How might God's people be described today? What are we teaching people?

*Sources:

- 1) McDowell, Josh, Evidence That Demands A Verdict, p. 50-52.
- 2) Bercot, David, Will The Real Heretics Please Stand Up

WHAT IS THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Jarrod Jacobs

On occasion, this author has a chance to answer different Bible questions. This article is written with the hope that it will help others who are asked similar questions concerning the Holy Spirit (I Pet. 3:15).

The "gift of the Holy Spirit" is mentioned in Acts 2. It is there on the day of Pentecost, that Peter and "the eleven" (v. 14) stood and preached the gospel to the Jews that had gathered that day (v. 5). Let us begin reading at verse 37. The record states: *"Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Brothers, what shall we do? And Peter said to them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is for you, and for your children, and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself"* (Acts 2:37-39).

One thing that ought to be understood as we study this subject is that there is a difference between the "gift" of the Holy Spirit, and the "gifts" of the Holy Spirit. The "gifts" of the Holy Spirit are named for us in I Corinthians 12:4, 8-10. These were gifts bestowed upon certain ones during the time when God's written word was not in its completed form. Chapter twelve of I Corinthians enumerates these gifts, and chapter thirteen tells us the duration of such gifts (v. 8-10). Yet, the "gift of the Holy Spirit" discussed in Acts 2

is different, for this is something that people receive after they have repented and have been baptized as Peter said on this occasion.

What is "the gift of the Holy Spirit"? It encompasses all the spiritual blessings which belong to those who are in Christ (Eph. 1:3; Acts 2:47; Rom. 8:16-17; II Cor. 5:17; Titus 1:2; etc.). Acts 3:19 is a parallel passage to Acts 2:38 wherein Peter speaks to the crowd gathered after they had healed the lame man. To this crowd, he tells them, *"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."* Therefore, the "times of refreshing" of 3:19 corresponds with "the gift of the Holy Spirit" in 2:38.

Sometimes, people say "the gift of the Holy Spirit" is the Holy Spirit. I disagree with this. The gift of the Holy Spirit is not the person of the Holy Spirit, but it is the Holy Spirit's gift! This is what is being promised. If one repents and is baptized for the remission of sins, he/she receives the Holy Spirit's gift ("times of refreshing from the Lord," salvation from sins, spiritual blessings in Christ, hope of Heaven, fellowship, etc.)

Are you saved? Have you received the Holy Spirit's gift (Acts 2:38)? If not, why not?

Could It be ...

Selected

- that people reject the Bible — not because it contradicts itself, but because it contradicts them?
- that some brethren do not attend various worship periods and Bible study classes because Christ is not really their "first love?"
- that Satan has lulled us into thinking that we are really standing, when indeed, we are ready to fall?
- we utterly abhor the violence going on in the world, yet do not think twice about what our families entertain themselves with on television and at the movies?
- that some brethren honestly see no connection between commitment, attendance, and involvement?

"A pessimist is someone who complains about the noise when opportunity knocks."

—L.E. Sloan

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